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ABSTRACT

Effective broadcast education should get students to perform professionally in broadcast situations with a minimum of guidance. To do this, class assignments should include either activities similar to commercial work or on-the-job experiences at the campus or local commercial radio stations. The possibilities for such activities and experiences include producing radio dramas in class, developing advertising programs in class projects, assisting in the underwriting procedures of campus radio programs, providing internship programs in cooperation with local commercial broadcasters, organizing group tours of commercial radio facilities, and inviting commercial broadcasters to speak to classes. (Addresses of broadcast publications and a description of one university's broadcast curriculum are attached.) (RL)

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Using the Medium to Teach the Medium: Radio Broadcasting

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Using the Medium to Teach the Medium:
Radio Broadcasting

You will not be surprised to know that the very best classrooms in broadcast education are the studio, the newsroom, the traffic desk, the music library and so on. What might surprise you is the extent to which the radio station can be taken to the student, and the extent to which broadcast instruction can be dovetailed into a station operation. Little if anything of what you see here will be new to you, but perhaps your ideas and activities in broadcasting will at least be reinforced, will be mirrored in a brief survey of what I and others we know are doing these days in broadcast education.

Number one, the first step toward effective broadcast education is eliminating "amateur" from our vocabulary. We begin with the assumption that our students can learn, can learn quickly, and can perform up to professional standard ... with a little guidance from us professionals and lots of practice.

Realize also that radio is a medium most admirably suited to communicating all manner of sensory images in our listeners. Radio has often been poo-poohed as an aural-only medium. Not so. In fact, only radio can conjure up the full range of fascinating sensory impressions. Billboards are mere transitory vehicles, here and gone in a flash; flyers and handbills mostly end up in the trash can or littering parking lots or city streets; newspapers--those excellent journalistic outlets provide us a permanent record, but in plain featureless black and white; television among the media to date is the least capable of communicating imagery: the tube is in fact too explicit, lacking even the advantage of film's Big Screen, locking the viewer into a dimensionless plane demanding nothing of the listener but superficial perception. All this sounds very strong, but I believe in the capacity of radio above all other media to excite, stimulate, depress, or activate media consumers. The point is that we all understand the power and potential of radio and communicate radio's merits vigorously to our students. Enough of that.

We can call to mind any of a variety of ways to use the medium to teach the medium, of which a few will be briefly outlined below.

Again, it is obvious the student should spend as much time as possible at the mike, on the console, in the field newsgathering, at the sports arena doing remotes, spinning records at a disco dance broadcast live from the student union, setting up and airing the finals of the school's College Bowl and the like. Hours as well spent producing public service announcements and documentaries, particularly if they can be used by the local commercial station with appropriated credits. Every student likes to get feedback from listeners and getting that actuality on network news is a special thrill.

Here are som other possibilities. Ask students to produce radio drama--after review, of course, of program radio from the 30's, 40's and 50's. Bring those old radio tapes into class, turn down the lights and let those students emerse themselves in radio's finest hour. The professor can point to several dist .ctive

features of program radio like sound effects, transition devices, incorporation of music and commercials into the play, use of a narrator and so on. Radio drama's not only the most demanding production task a student can be assigned but also is likely to attract an avid listenership. Our little campus station has aired student-written and produced drama and a local commercial station is now syndicating an original "Lum and Abner"-tpye show. Radio drama is a good way to assure any local station of distinctive sound and is always likely to attract listeners. No one would claim that radio theatre is likely to supplant TV as the chief programmatic medium, but a student so trained has, I believe, a leg up on the average broadcast applicant. Students should always write and produce for the air ... with the prof reserving the right to judge which efforts are airworthy. Air use becomes a reward and helps motivate students to excellent work.

Another particular area of training is sales. Radio sales is probably the most difficult single thing to teach in college, since most of our stations are strictly non - commercial and since a novice can't be turned loose unattended. We do have one carrier-current campus station in Arkansas that sells advertising--legally. But for most of us there are at least two viable O.J.T. possibilities: public service and underwriting. We've been heavy into public service for a long time but have only recently been agressive about getting public info on the air. I assign each of my students a quota of public serviec "sales"each month. The students selects the client, makes initial and follow-up contacts, writes the copy, produces the announcements, and keeps a record of his or her work with the client. No money changes hands since the service is no-charge. But the student feels some of the pressures of establishing and servicing the account, pleasing the client, and meeting deadlines.

Underwriting is another sales - related possibility. We haven't gotten much into underwriting because of our extremely limited power and limited curriculum but are presently working to extend both. Station promotion is a key and we'll mention that again in a moment. Assuming the station is visible and can demonstrate at least some listenership, the campus station can establish reasonable underwriting rates and help defray at least part of the station's programming costs. I don't think I'd expect a student, a novice broadcaster, to go out and sell a program to a potential underwriter. But once the initial agreement has been reached there is not reason why a student could not service the account just as he or she would service a commercial account.

High-quality promotion is difficult with a non-professional staff and meagre budget. But there are plenty of no-cost or low-cost promotional ideas that can help sell the campus station. For example our station arranged with the campus bookstore to order T-shirt iron-ons. We ran a T-shirt design contest with a couple of albums as the prize. The contest itself was a good station promotional and staffers and others with the new station logo on their persons will be good promotion as well. We're considering other possibilities that are logistically simple enough for our student staff to handle. We know that "sales" and "promotion" are uttered in one breath incommercial radio, so any reasonable effort at teaching promotion by doing promotion is worthwhile.

We are very high on a fairly new phenomenon in Arkansas broadcasting, the internship. It's one thing to offer a "practicum" at the campus station. However

valuable that is there is no subsitute for O.J.T. at a real live Commercial station. To me the internship is the epitome of using the medium to teach the medium. We have a number so stations pledged to help us by providing a position and supervisor for a full semester's full-time internship. Of course there is nothing new about the idea ... but typical practice was to keep our experienced students on campus to run the station until the very last day -- commencement. We give up some strength in our student staff but render a great service to those seniors with a solid internship program.

The next best thing to the on-location internship can be offered in any course along the way. Commercial broadcasters-- particularly in your university's primary service area-- are usually more than happy to have groups tour their facilities and talk with their personnel. Of equal value in some ways is inviting commercial broadcasters to classes to talk about-- and where possible demonstrate-- their specialities. We educators know that experts enhance our classes just as we broadcasters know that a variety of voices on the air enhance our sound. Don't forget those expert human resources available to us. Our students will definitely benefit and we can benefit also through regular contact with those people. They are, among other things, the principle outlets for our products. In the same vein, it is quite possible that local and area stations can use our advanced students in part-time jobs or perhaps our people can do ala carte work, such as in news, production, sales, or sports. It's good for the student, for the employer, for our program, and ultimately for our graduates.

About the station operation-- it is clear from the foregoing that the best classroom for broadcast education is the station. Some preparation in the traditional classroom is necessary, but devices like self-teaching texts and student lab assistants provide the basics very quickly. Repetition of the most elementary tasks is critical in the early going-- whether in the lab, newsroom, or control room. Our station is completely student-operated except for my work... I'm credited with six hours on my load for managing KSWH. I have student workers who take the major responsibilities like program management, news assignments and editing, public service, music management, traffic and the like. And for the most part they do their jobs very well. With the natural turnover from graduation and ingress-egress of casual students, training is constant. More direct operational training is provided by my experienced people than by me. The station system perpetuates itself. Initiative is very often taken by my student staff, just as initiative is taken necessarily by commercial staffers.

We don't mean to imply our educational situation is ideal. We need more paid positions, state-of-the-art equipment, class A power and one or two full-time professionals in key positions. But on the other hand our students of necessity assume positions of major operational responsibility and take part in decision making. Because of the program's demands it is rare that we have a person on our staff who doesn't have an abiding interest in broadcasting. There is no waiting around until the final semester to get on the air, write copy for newscasts, or produce for air. Our students, perhaps like yours, become thoroughly emersed in the station operation from Day 1, and learn as they go. That appears, at least, to follow the first rule of broadcast education: use the medium to teach the medium.

Program Description: Broadcasting
Henderson State University

Summary of Course Offerings

Title	Sem. Hrs.
Radio-Television Broadcasting	3
Radio Announcing	3
Broadcast Journalism	3
Radio Production	3
Advanced Radio Announcing (1 hr. 1 sem.)	8
Total	20 hrs.

Course Descriptions

Radio-Television Broadcasting
Survey of the field of broadcasting, including its history and growth trends, economic factors, and the nature of broadcast regulations. Lecture format, three hours per week for one semester.

Radio Announcing
Conceptual and skill development in the variety of tasks a professional announcer may be required to perform. Includes relationship of the announcer to the total station operation, voice development and articulation training, board operation, production, remote broadcasting, sports announcing, interviewing, and actualities; FCC R & R related to the announcer's responsibilities; study for the FCC Third Class Examination. Lecture/lab format with three hours lecture a week for one semester.

Broadcast Journalism
Introduction to principles of broadcast writing. Emphasis on newsgathering and news and feature writing. Includes editorial writing, public affairs program design and scripting and sports writing. Instruction in responsibilities and rights of the broadcast journalist. Airworthy student work included in KSWH-FM programming. Cooperation with university public information office as additional outlet for student work. Lecutre/lab format with lecture three hours per week.

Radio Production
Laboratory course format with one one-hour organizational meeting weekly. Production of one weekly series by class and one half-hour program by each student during the semester. Prerequisite: Radio Announcing.

Advanced Radio Announcing
On-air shift three hours per week per hour credit. Advanced announcers are core of the on-air staff. No lecture; evaluation continuous through the semester.

Financial Aid

Student Finiancial aid is available in two forms; federal work-study stipend at minimum wage up to fifteen hours a week; university funded work-study stipend at same rate and hour maximum. No academic scholarships presently available in broadcasting.

Student Staff Positions

News Director
Sports Director
Program Director
Music Director
Public Service Director
Production Manager
Lab Assistant
Secretary
Staff Writer
Staff Producer
Staff Announcer

ADDENDA

Other readily apparent possibilities for using the medium to teach the medium:

Analysis of radio programming:

Format analysis	Delivery rate
News item length and mix	Audio Environment
Program continuity	Announcing style

Broadcast publications (See below for addresses).

Announcing - Billboard
Management - Broadcasting/Hall Report/Perry's Broadcasting & the Law
General Information - Broadcasting Yearbook/Billboard International Buyers' Guide

Sales/Promotion materials (See below for addresses)

Jennings Broadcast and Creative (Sales)
Radio Advertising Bureau (Sales & Promotion)
National Research Bureau (Copy service)
Tripac Cooperative Advertising Guidebook (Sales)

Billboard Publications, Inc. (Billboard Magazine; Billboard International Buyers Guide; Hall Radio Report)
9000 Sunset Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA 90069
(213) 273-7040
Cable: Billboy LA; LA Telex: 698669; NY Telex: 620523

Broadcasting Pulications, Inc. (Broadcasting Magazine; Broadcasting Yearbook
1735 De Sales Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036
(202) 638-1022

Jennings Broadcast and Creative (formerly AdVentures International)
222 Columbus Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94133

Perry Publications
Box 8357 $48/yr.
Knoxville, Tenessee 37916
(615) 483-8474

Radio Advertising Bureau
555 Madison Avenue $50/mo. = $600/yr.
New York, NY 10022
(212) 688-4020

National Research Bureau
Burlington, Iowa 52601
(319) 752-5415

Tripac, Inc.
P.O. Box 627 $25(annual)
Middlesboro, Kentucky 40965
(606) 248-5842